1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5
Nepal AK1
Sikkim AK3

Although they have not been influenced by Europeans the Lepchas have been very greatly influenced and their ways of life much modified by the contact and pressure of their more highly developed neighbours, the Sikkimese, the Nepali, and above all the Tibetans. The extent of this modification is almost incalculable, owing to the fact that there is no precise information available about these neighbouring societies. Tibet is, I suppose, the most written-about country in the world, but none of the literature that I know of is sufficiently detailed to allow comparisons between the Lepchas and any equivalent Tibetan group. Although there are many books on lamaism I have found none which describes the Lhatsun-pa subsect of the Nyingma-pa sect—the variation followed in Lingthem monastery—so that it is impossible to state definitely whether the Lepchas have ignored or considerably modified any aspect or aspects of the religion to which they have been converted. It is as though an investigator were trying to find out about Baptists and could only get information about Christianity in general, with some of the more obvious distinctions between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism noted.

With regard to the Sikkimese and non-Gurkha Nepali the situation is in some respects simpler; there is practically no information of any sort available about them. The *Gazeteer of Sikkim* published over forty years ago, contains some generalised statements about the habits of the Sikkimese; and the writings[9] and conversation of Major C. J. Morris who had studied the Gurkha soldiers under his command have given me information on certain points. Despite this slight help it is impossible in nearly every instance to state with any sort of certainty whether a given custom, belief or story is confined to the Lepchas, is shared by them with some other tribe, or has been relatively recently introduced from without. On the whole the only available source of information has been Lepcha tradition. Until other tribes in the same area have been studied (and the fact that Nepal, Bhutan and Tibet are practically closed to Europeans makes such studies in the near future problematical) precise questions of culture contact must remain unanswered.

The Lepchas are a mongoloid people, with, it would seem, slightly more pronounced Mongolian features, fairer complexions and greater stature than their present neighbours. Many of the children have carroty or auburn hair, but the hair of adults is always

[9] *Handbooks for the Indian Army: Gurkhas.* By Major C. J. Morris. Delhi 1937.

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

dark brown or black. I took no measurements, for such behaviour would have been too disconcerting, but I calculate that the mean height for men is about 68 inches, the women being three or four inches shorter. The people are solidly and rather squarely built, with, like most mountain races, very strongly developed calves and leg muscles. The men, with the exception of the lamas, wear their hair in a long plait reaching down to the waist; the women also plait or braid their hair. Although the dresses of the two sexes differ in detail both wear skirt-like garments down to the knees with the legs and feet bare, and it is often extremely difficult to guess a person's sex when seen from behind. Very few Lepcha men have any facial hair, and when I have shown my photographs to friends there have usually been a great number of mistakes in the sex of the subjects.

V

The first two stages of the road from Gangtok to Tibet are Dikchu and Singhik. The mule-road follows the left bank of the Teesta river; a little before Dikchu on the right bank starts the reserve of Zongu. About a mile before Singhik there is a tiny settlement called Mangan; it is situated about a thousand feet above the river. Mangan is a halting-place for muleteers going to and from Tibet; it is a small bazaar and contains the only stores within a radius of about twenty miles. There are half-a-dozen stores with a cheap stock of mixed goods; they are owned by members of the Indian Mahawari caste; their dealings with the Lepchas will be described later. There is also there a government-trained dispenser, a postmaster (the post from Gangtok is brought out twice weekly, on which days the post-office is open), an elementary schoolmaster, all these three government officials, a couple of Tibetan prostitutes for the use of the muleteers, and some liquor shops where the native commercial spirit, *arak*, can be bought. There are perhaps thirty houses.

Branching off from the main mule road on the left is a narrow and extremely precipitous path which descends to the Teesta; at this place the river is crossed by a plank bridge with steel supports; this has recently replaced the fragile and giddy-looking Lepcha bridge made entirely of bamboo, and represents the only permanent link between Zongu and the rest of Sikkim. For a little while the path on the other side skirts the river, passing on its way a substantial wooden shed which has been erected to receive the

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

142
622
291
[636]

TEMPA, THE DEPOSED MUKTAIR

CHALA MANDAL, THE HEAD OF THE VILLAGE

[Facing p. 128]

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

142
291

NINETY - YEAR - OLD SERVING, THE OLDEST MAN IN LINGTHEM

TAKNEUM *YOUMI*, WHO ATE BOAR-PIG

[facing p. 136]

CHÉLÉ, WHO DOES NOT WANT TO MARRY HIS AUNT

[facing p. 160]

[412]

PATEK, THE HEAD OF A HOUSEHOLD OF SIX AT 17. WITH HIM PONGRING, THE MONASTERY GUARDIAN

412

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

142
291

(*a*) LUMBA *CHITHEMBU*
(*b*) JIROONG *CHÉNÉ* IN TIBETAN HAT
(*c*) SECOND DORJÉ LAPOON WITH THE HAT OF HIS RANK

(*d*) THE PAINTER MONK, LHARIBU CHUJEN OF PANUNG
(*e*) ASHYOK *YOUMI*, WEARING THE OLD-FASHIONED WOVEN LEPCHA HAT

[facing p. 192]

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

APPRENTICE LAMAS

The four-year old son of Chudo.

Chimpet in lama's dress, with his hands joined in prayer; taken inside the monastery porch.

[341]
142
292
793

[facing p. 200]

I: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

[facing p. 288]

CHILDREN

Six-year-old girl, Pankek, with her sickle.

Four-year-old girl with her necklace with the snail-shells on, so that her soul can escape from devils. On the right the little packet with her sloughed navel-string.

751
291
142
412
846

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

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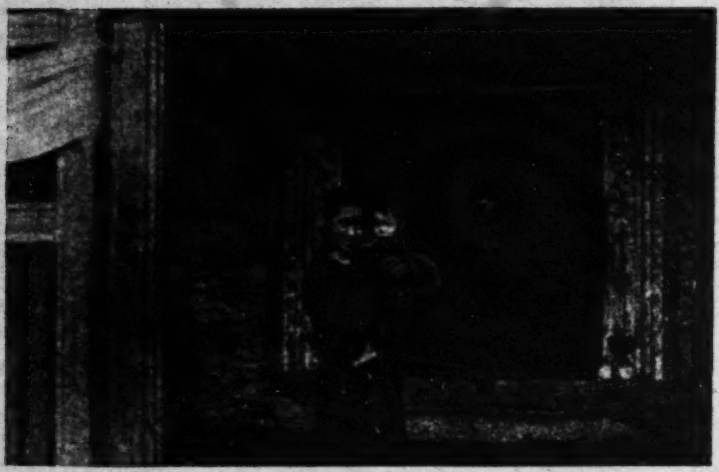
346
854



PARENTS AND CHILDREN

Above : Chudo with his youngest daughter in the monastery porch.
Below : Tafoor, his wife, Chimpet, the eldest and youngest daughter.

[facing p. 294]

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

854
142
291

METHODS OF CARRYING CHILDREN

Tafoor's two middle daughters.

Tafoor and his youngest daughter: Jiroong behind.

[facing p. 304]

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

142
291

[52]
[732]

Above: DADOOL AND RIGYA (IN HAT)
Below: KANDEN AND CHIMPET. CHIMPET IS LAUGHING SO MUCH THAT HE IS NEARLY IN TEARS; KANDEN SMILES SECRETIVELY

[facing p. 368]

PLATE 28

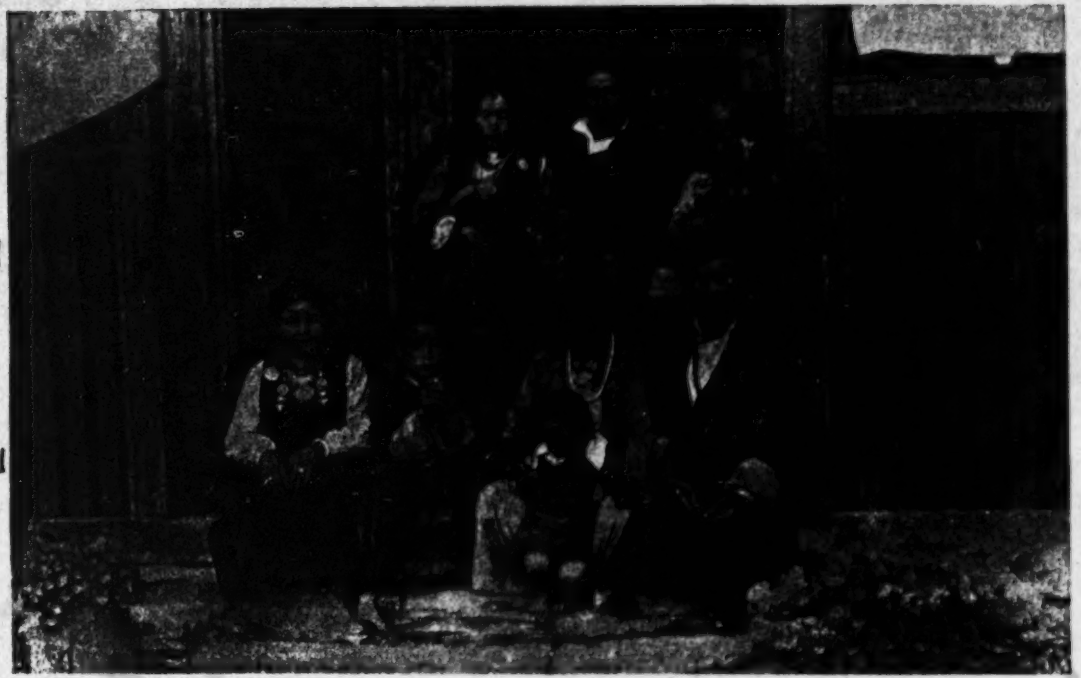
142
291
[301]

MRS. DATOOP

PICHI

[Facing p. 416]

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5



[facing p. 420]

THE DATOOP FAMILY IN THE DOORWAY OF THE LHA-GONG

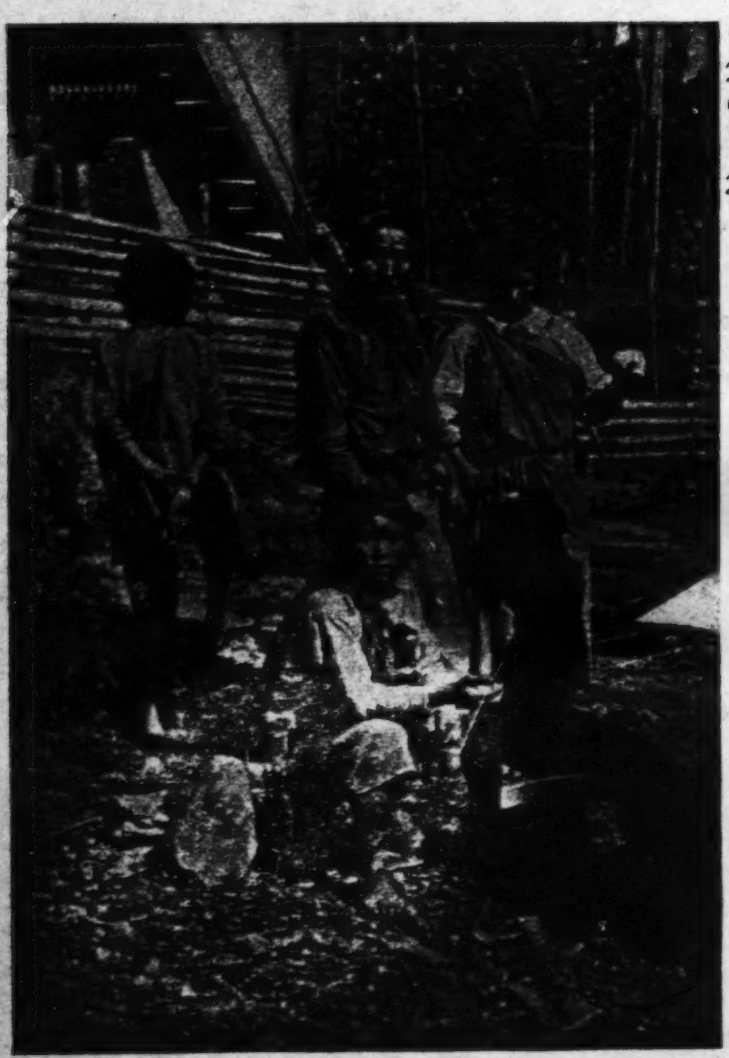
Standing : Mrs. Pembu, Pembu, Kondé (a " niece " ; I have just bandaged her).

Seated : The younger married daughter, Kolok Tyong, the youngest son, Mrs. Datoop with Pembu's son Dugoo, and Datoop.

142
241
301

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

192
291
417
415
283

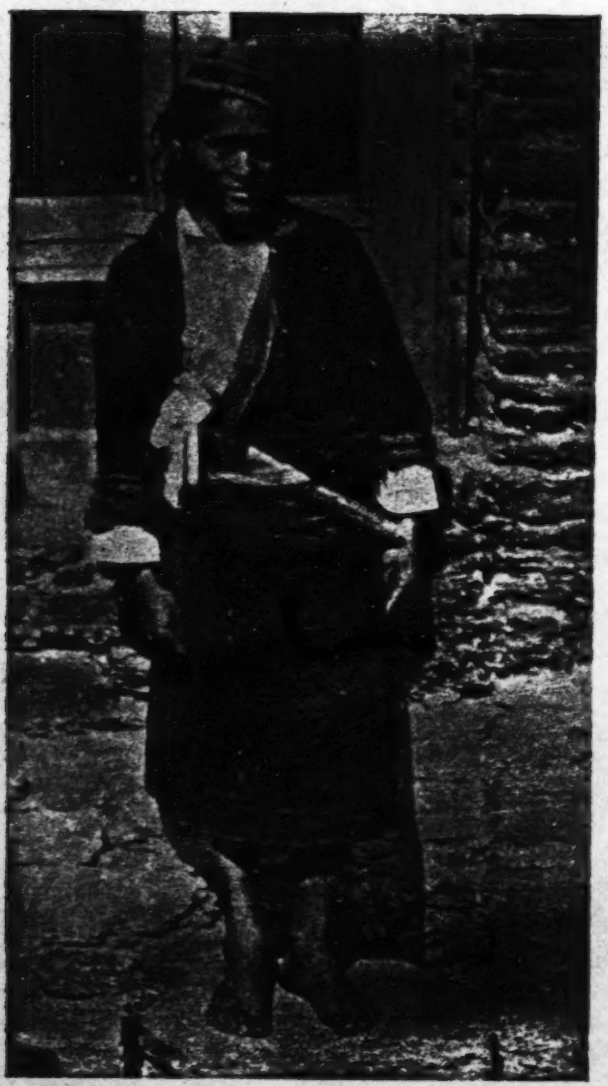


MR. AND MRS. JIROONG. MRS. JIROONG IS SPINNING. SHE IS WEARING TIBETAN DRESS AND HER HUSBAND'S HAT. SEATED IN FRONT IS DADOOL SOAKING A CUT FOOT. ATYOOK TURNS HIS BACK

[facing p. 424]

1: Gorer J-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

159
142
291
412



KURMA *GYAPŌN*

[facing p. 384]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

787
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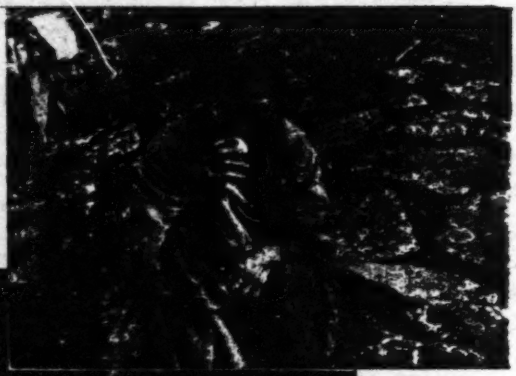
291



The *Cherim* ceremony. The *Mun* Pom-Ri divining by means of an egg.

778
415
285

The rough altar, with the offering to Kinchinjunga in position.

782
291

Kahlyeu and the *Mun* imploring the spirits to accept the offering

[facing p. 4]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

142
291

Tempa.

Grandfather.

[facing p. 16]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

301
888
291
142

Pong Ring, the monastery verger.

Grandmother, with the evening's supply of drinks.

142
415
291

[Facing p. 22]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

142
291
284

Lepcha boy.

606

"A little reading or writing according to taste may then be indulged in": being otherwise a candid portrait of the author. *(Photograph by F. S. Smythe, reproduced by permission of the Mount Everest Committee, 1936).*

[facing p. 30]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

features, and a good deal too, by imitation, in habit; still he differs from his Tibetan prototype, though not so decidedly as from the Nepalese and Bhutanese, between whom he is hemmed into a narrow tract of mountain country, barely sixty miles in breadth.

"An attentive examination of the Lepcha in one respect entirely contradicts our preconceived notions of a mountaineer, as he is timid, peaceful and no brawler; qualities which are all the more remarkable from contrasting so strongly with those of his neighbours to the east and west: of whom the Gurkhas are brave and warlike to a proverb, and the Bhutanese quarrelsome, cowardly, and cruel (this statement is altogether unfair to the latter and in no way true). A group of Lepchas is exceedingly picturesque. They are of short stature—four feet eight inches to five feet; rather broad in the chest, and with muscular arms, but small hands and slender wrists. The face is broad, flat, and of eminently Tartar character, flat-nosed, oblique-eyed, with no beard, and a little moustache. The lower limbs are powerfully developed, befitting genuine mountaineers: the feet are small. Though never really handsome, and very womanish in the cast of countenance, they have invariably a mild, frank, and even engaging expression, which I have in vain sought to analyse, and which is perhaps due more to the absence of anything unpleasing than to the presence of direct grace or beauty. . . . Indolence, when left to themselves, is their besetting sin; they detest any fixed employment, and their foulness of person and garments renders them disagreeable inmates: in this rainy climate they are supportable out of doors. . . . In disposition they are amiable and obliging, frank, humorous, and polite, without the servility of the Hindoos; and their address is free and unconstrained. Their intercourse with one another and with Europeans is scrupulously honest; a present is divided equally amongst many, without a syllable of discontent or grudging look or word: each, on receiving his share, coming up and giving the donor a brusque bow and thanks. They

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

793
346

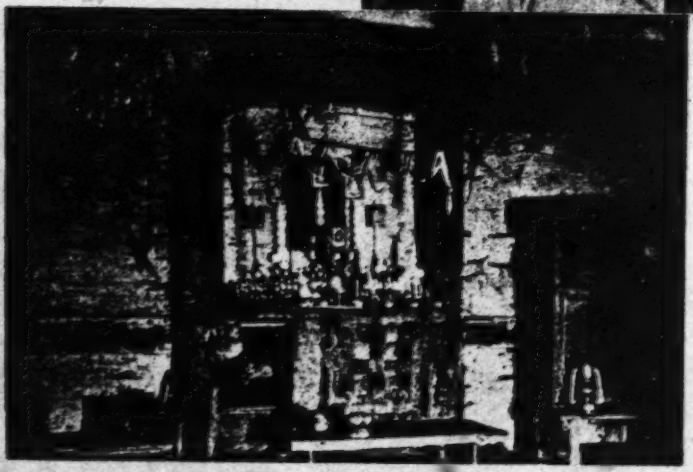
Inebus performing their ceremony of circumambulating the monastery.

142
291

Hlatam, the alleged poisoner.

Domestic altar in the private house of a Lama. Note the reserve store of maize hanging from the rafters on the left; and on the right a hurricane lantern, one of the treasures of the house.

778
251
373



[facing p. 77]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

793
142
154

The second Dorje Lopön.

The senior Dorje Lopön.

[facing p. 84]

291
142
159

Tafoor.

Chötemba.

[facing p. 85]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

142
291

[301]

Pemba, the son of Datoop.

His wife; and on the left a cousin.

[211]

[415]

Conversation piece.

[facing p. 96]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

142
291
159

On the left the oldest man in Lingtem, who claims to be over ninety, with Chötembu's wife.

[778]

The *Hlaribu*, or local artist-Lama. The objects on the left are small revolving prayer-drums.

224
273
415

The method of drinking *chi*. The special hat which the man is wearing is made of plaited bamboo, and is only worn when hunting. It is not often seen nowadays.

[facing p. 106]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

142
291
159

Chala Mandal, the Headman of Lingtem.

[411
622]

[333]

Lepcha in national dress.

[facing p. 107]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

756
755
301
142
291
415

The Mun Gongyop making an offering. He is assisted by his wife, who squats on the right. The object in the saucepan is a bamboo strainer, out of which she is ladling *chi* to refill the cup which Gongyop is holding.

793
755
212
142
291

Tafoor "prescribing" for Chano's wife. Chano, on the left, appears to be somewhat doubtful of the issue; or perhaps he is wondering whether he can afford the necessary "treatment."

778
249

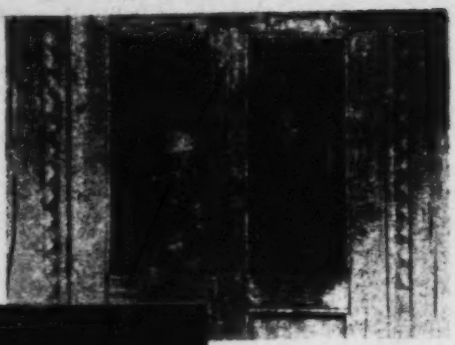
A *Mung-Li*, or demon's house, on the edge of a cardamom field.

[FACING p. 146]

2: Morris T -5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

291
142
[631
34]

Happy family.



[235]

Lepcha girl.

[482
854]

Tafoor's two daughters.

[301
415]

Baby, having overeaten at luncheon.

[facing p.210]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

291
142

Town-bred. A Gangtok Lepcha boy. Judging from his headgear I surmise that some relative is a servant at the British Residency.

301
177

305
301

Country-bred. Note the necklace of snail shells.

[facing p.211]

231
351
482
142
291

291
142

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

Mikma, in the centre, about to set off for his *Askyuk*, or formal betrothal. The Mandal, his official "go-between," is on the right, and the other men are carrying the special betrothal gifts, among which, on the left, is a pig's carcass.

Mikma, a bridegroom of fourteen.

[FACING P. 226]

2: Morris T-5 (1937)1938 AK5 Lepcha AK5

142
291

Karma.

142
291
531
415
824

Culture contact. A Lepcha youth on return from two years in Gangtok. The object against the right doorpost is a bamboo water-container.

[FACING p.242]

291
142

Ongden, a bridegroom of fifty.

342
571
415
351
291
285
417
481

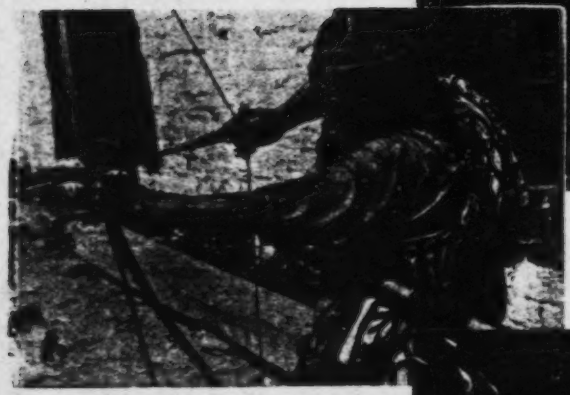
Ongden's new wife (in the bottom left-hand corner, wearing a white bodice) arriving at his house for the wedding. Her attendants are just about to enter the house.

[facing p. 258]

491

A Lepcha bridge.

411
291
142



Karma demonstrating the method of using a bow and arrow.

487

"Road" in the upper Talung Valley.

[Facing p. 298]

7: Hooker D-5 (1849-1851) 1854
AK5 Lepcha AK5

157 An attentive examination of the Lepcha in one respect entirely contradicts our preconceived notions of a mountaineer, as he is timid, peaceful, and no brawler; qualities which are all the more remarkable from contrasting so strongly with those of his neighbours to the east and west: of whom the Ghorkas are brave and warlike to a proverb, and the Bhotanese quarrelsome, cowardly, and cruel. A 142 group of Lepchas is exceedingly picturesque. They are of short stature—four feet eight inches to five feet—rather broad in the chest, and with muscular arms, but small hands and slender wrists.* The face is broad, flat, and of eminently Tartar character, flat-nosed and oblique-eyed, with no beard, and little moustache; the complexion is sallow, or often a clear olive; the hair is collected into an immense tail, plaited flat or round. The lower limbs are powerfully developed, befitting genuine mountaineers: the feet are small. Though never really handsome, and very womanish in the cast of countenance, they have invariably a mild, frank, and even engaging expression, which I have in vain sought to analyse, and which is perhaps due more to the absence of anything unpleasing, than to the presence of direct grace or beauty. In like manner, the girls are often very engaging to look upon, though without one good feature: they are all smiles and good-nature; and the children are frank, lively, laughing urchins. The old women are thorough hags. Indolence, when left to themselves, is 131 their besetting sin; they detest any fixed employment, and their foulness of person and garments renders them disagreeable inmates: in this rainy climate they are 132 insupportable out of doors. Though fond of bathing when

[411] * I have seldom been able to insert my own wrist (which is smaller than the average) into the wooden guard which the Lepcha wears on his left, as a protection against the bow-string: it is a curved ring of wood with an opening at one side, through which, by a little stretching, the wrist is inserted.

10: Waddell G-5 (1891) 1899 AK5 Lepcha AK5

114 opposed to the views of Mr. RISLEY [1]), Colonel DALTON [2]), and other writers who have repeated the statements of the earlier travellers Drs. CAMPBELL and HOOKER, who mixed up the Lepchas a good deal with their Tibetan conquerors. For my results show, that

114
174

[142]
[291]

A RONG OR LEPCHA.
(From photograph by Mr. HOFFMANN).

the so-called Khamba-branch of the tribe are not Lepchas at all, but Tibetan invaders from the Kham province of Tibet; whereas the Lepchas are decidedly of Indo-Chinese origin

[1]) Tribes and Castes of Bengal. Calcutta 1890, IV. p. 5.
[2]) Ethnology of Bengal. Calcutta, 1872.

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

farming must already have been effected by the Rong in very early times. 205 174

Gorer believes that the Rong were hunters about three hundred years ago, and that they carried on a little farming with dry rice and millet and kept a few cattle. When the Bhutanese and the Nepalese overran the land, the Lepchas withdrew into the forests, where they gave up farming and lived solely by hunting. When peace was restored they again took up to farming.[169]

(*l*) The Anthropological classification of the Rong

There are two basic types among the Lepchas which have to be clearly differentiated. The one with the long small face, the high forehead, the high narrow nose, and the well-defined eye-brow prominences; the eye is mostly without the Mongolian fold (if the upper lid droops it does not cover the inner corner of the eye). The face is also well-modelled; the cheek bones are not very prominent. The form of the head is mesocephalic or dolichocephalic. These people are taller and somewhat above the average height. The colour of the skin is light yellow. (Fig. 45). 142 141

The other type has a wide short face, a wide low forehead, well-defined supra-orbital ridges, a broad nose with depressed root and cheek bones that are somewhat more prominent. The eye often shows the Mongolian fold. The lips are thin, the shape of the head is brachycephalic, and the colour of the skin light yellow. Both the types have a slight growth of beard and a scanty growth of hair all over the body. The Mongolian spot occurs among most of the children of both types. The Lepchas call the spot "ri-om" and say that children without the spot are delicate. (Fig. 46)

The Rong have well-proportioned bodies. The muscles of the thigh and calves are particularly well-formed because of the fact that they are tireless mountain climbers. On the average however, the Rong are more lightly built than the neighbouring people. The women have very finely cut features.

169. op. cit. p. 110.

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

142
291
302

19. Lepcha grandmother with grandchildren

142
411
137
224

22. Lepcha hunter

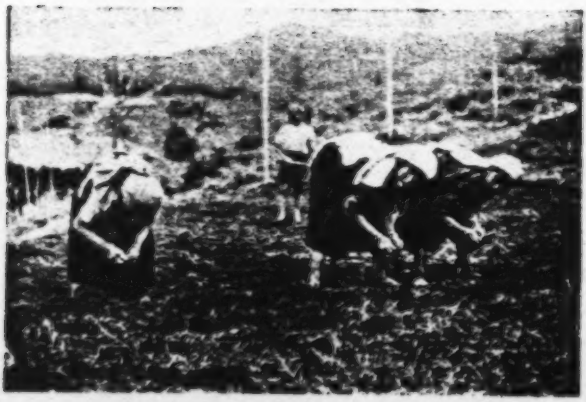
Fig. 20-21
see p. 61-62

[End Plate 8]
[End Plates 1-7 not processed]

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

142
231
482
412
415
291
857

25. Lepcha children starting for field work



142
291
243
462

26. Lepcha women planting rice

Fig. 23-24 p. 99

[End Plate 9]

XIII

142
291
301

33. Lepcha woman

142
291

34. Lepcha woman

[End Plate 13]

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

142
291
301
302

35. Lepcha young woman

36. Lepcha young man

[End Plate 14]

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

291
482
445
412
137
313

37. Lepcha grandmother cutting bamboo

142
291
302
137

38. Lepcha children

[End Plate 15]

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

291
482
415
854

41. Lepcha mother carrying her baby

854
142
291

42. The baby in the cradle

[End Plate 17]

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

142
241
301

43. Lepcha girl carrying a baby

[302]

44. Lepcha girl

[End Plate 18]

11:Hermanns M-5 (1951)1954
AK5 Lepcha AK5

142
291
302

45. Lepcha man

46. Lepcha man

[End Plate 19]
[End Notes 20-38 not processed]